

TOWN SERVICES

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

The Stow Agricultural Commission is charged with maintaining the viability of agriculture in Stow. This includes advising other Town boards on matters pertaining to agriculture, resolving conflicts between agricultural and residential uses, and promoting agriculture in town. The Agricultural Commission has a website, StowAgCom.org, which provides notices of agricultural events and conditions. The website can also be reached through the Town website.

In 2011, a new berry pest arrived in New England: the Spotted Wing Drosophila. This new pest attacks brambles such as raspberries, blackberries, and also strawberries and other fruit. The pest appeared in late August, and pretty much wiped out the fall raspberry crop. The combined efforts of the Extension Services of all the New England states are trying to determine the best way to combat this pest. There may be organic methods of control. When information is available, it will be posted on StowAgCom.org.

Residents are reminded that Stow has a right-to-farm bylaw, which reiterates State laws in our Town bylaws. As part of this bylaw, we provide a notification form for use in transfers of property that lets people know that farms are active in Stow. The notification form should be filed with the Selectmen's office before the transfer of property is completed. The form can be downloaded from StowAgCom.org or through the Town website.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Painter, Clerk
Dwight Sipler, Chair

Kathy Steege
Julie Martin Sullivan

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Building Department issued a total of 239 Building Permits in 2011. We inspected the construction of the Center School Phase I structural steel, rough frame, roof and finish work, commercial expansion, new homes, kitchen & bath remodeling, home additions and wood & pellet stoves. Villages at Stow and Derby Woods continued at a steady pace. With the heavy snow during the winter and the concern for possible structure or roof collapse, time was spent inspecting roofs and monitoring structures. In addition we attended seminars for new building codes, energy codes & fire safety as required under the continuing education requirements set forth by the Department of Public Safety. In addition to the duties as Building Inspectors, we are also in charge of the following municipal properties: Town Building, Town Hall, West School, and the Crescent Street Garage.

We have maintained the existing Town Buildings as follows:

Town Hall

Regular maintenance was performed. In addition, annual maintenance of the oil burners was completed as well as annual testing of the smoke detectors & fire alarm notification system.